

IN THE CLAIMS:

1. – 26. (cancelled)

27. (new) A flexible coupling capable of transmitting torque and comprising:

a first member having a first rotary axis;

a second member having a second rotary axis; and

at least three joints connecting the first and second members, the joints being circumferentially spaced about said first and second axes,

wherein each joint comprises a pin carried by the first member and a socket carried by the second member, the pin registering into the socket so that torque can be transmitted between said first and second members and so that relative sliding and rotational movement can take place between each pin and associated socket,

wherein each socket is connected by a flexible extension to the second member such that the first and second members can articulate relative to one another.

28. (new) A flexible coupling according to claim 27 wherein the pins have cylindrical surfaces which engage with cylindrical bores on the sockets.

29. (new) A flexible coupling according to claim 27 wherein the pins have part-spherical heads received in cylindrical bores in the sockets.

30. (new) A flexible coupling according to claim 27 wherein the pins are flexibly connected to the first member.

31. (new) A flexible coupling according to claim 27 wherein longitudinal axes formed by the socket and pin joints lie in a first plane.

32. (new) A flexible coupling according to claim 31 wherein a longitudinal axis of at least one socket and pin joint lies in a plane parallel to the first plane.

33. (new) A flexible coupling capable of transmitting torque and comprising:

a first member having a rotary axis and comprising at least three pins;

a second member comprising at least six sockets; and

a third member having a rotary axis and comprising at least three pins,

wherein the first member is connected to the second member by at least three joints and the second member is connected to the third member by at least three joints, the joints being circumferentially spaced about said axes,

wherein each joint comprises a pin carried by the first or third member and a socket carried by the second member, the pin registering into the socket so that torque can be transmitted between the respective joint members and so that relative sliding and rotational movement can take place between each pin and associated socket,

wherein the sockets of the second member are connected by flexible extensions such that the first and third members can articulate relative to one another.

34. (new) A flexible coupling according to claim 33 wherein the pins of at least the first or third member are flexibly mounted thereto.

35. (new) A flexible coupling according to claim 33 wherein the sockets are mounted on a ring and interconnected by flexible elements.

36. (new) A flexible coupling according to claim 33 wherein longitudinal axes formed by the socket and pin joints lie in a single plane.

37. (new) A flexible coupling according to claim 36 wherein at least one longitudinal axis formed by a socket and pin joint lies in a plane parallel to said single plane.

38. (new) A flexible coupling according to claim 35 wherein the sockets are connected by flexible elements which are bowed in shape.

39. (new) A flexible coupling according to claim 35 wherein the sockets are formed by inserts received in bores in said ring, the bores being flexibly interconnected.

40. (new) A flexible coupling according to claim 33 wherein the pins have cylindrical surfaces which engage with cylindrical bores on the sockets.

41. (new) A flexible coupling according to claim 33 wherein the pins have part-spherical heads received in cylindrical bores in the sockets.

42. (new) A flexible coupling according to claim 35 wherein the first member comprises a wheel having internally projecting radial pins.

43. (new) A flexible coupling according to claim 42 wherein the sockets include inserts in the form of bushes in which the pins are received.

44. (new) A flexible coupling according to claim 43 wherein the inserts are snap-fit into the sockets.

45. (new) A flexible coupling according to claim 35 wherein the first and third members comprise outwardly projecting pins received in alternate sockets on the ring.

46. (new) A flexible coupling according to claim 45 wherein all the sockets are arranged to project inwardly from the ring.

47. (new) A flexible coupling according to claim 35 wherein the sockets alternately project inwardly and outwardly, and wherein one of the first or third members has inwardly projecting pins and the other of the first or third member has outwardly projecting pins, the pins being received in inwardly and outwardly directed sockets, respectively.

48. (new) A flexible coupling according to claim 35 wherein said ring comprises two parts which are detachably secured together, each said ring part providing a portion of each socket such that when the ring parts are secured together, the socket portions are aligned to form the sockets.

49. (new) A flexible coupling according to claim 48 wherein the ring parts are identical.

50. (new) A flexible coupling according to claim 48 wherein the ring parts are prevented from becoming detached from each other by inserts received in the sockets and which receive the pins.

51. (new) A flexible coupling capable of transmitting torque and comprising:

a first member having a rotary axis and comprising at least three sockets;

a second member comprising at least six pins; and

a third member having a rotary axis and comprising at least three sockets,

wherein the first member is connected to the second member by at least three joints and the second member is connected to the third member by at least three joints, the joints being circumferentially spaced about said axes,

wherein each joint comprises a socket carried by the first or third member and a pin carried by the second member, the pin registering into the socket so that torque can be transmitted between the respective joint members and so that relative

sliding and rotational movement can take place between each pin and associated socket,

wherein the pins of the second member are interconnected by flexible elements such that the first and third members can articulate relative to one another.

52. (new) A flexible coupling according to claim 51 wherein the sockets of at least the first or third member are flexibly mounted thereto.

53. (new) A flexible coupling according to claim 51 wherein the pins are mounted on a ring and interconnected by flexible elements.

54. (new) A flexible coupling according to claim 51 wherein longitudinal axes formed by the socket and pin joints lie in a single plane.

55. (new) A flexible coupling according to claim 51 wherein longitudinal axes formed by the socket and pin joints lie in at least two parallel planes.

56. (new) A flexible coupling according to claim 53 wherein the pins are connected by flexible elements which are bowed in shape.

57. (new) A flexible coupling according to claim 53 wherein the pins are detachably connected to the ring.

58. (new) A flexible coupling according to claim 51 wherein the pins have cylindrical surfaces which engage with cylindrical bores on the sockets.

59. (new) A flexible coupling according to claim 51 wherein the pins have part-spherical heads received in cylindrical bores in the sockets.

60. (new) A flexible coupling according to claim 51 wherein the sockets include inserts in the form of bushes in which the pins are received.

61. (new) A flexible coupling according to claim 51 wherein all the pins project outwardly.

62. (new) A flexible coupling according to claim 53 wherein the pins alternately project inwardly and outwardly, and wherein one of the first or third members has inwardly projecting sockets and the other of the first or third member has outwardly projecting sockets, the pins received in inwardly and outwardly directed sockets, respectively.